

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 4, 6-23, 26-30, 39, 40 and 43-50 are pending in the present application. Claims 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13-19, 21, 23, 27, 39, 40, 43, 44 and 46 are amended and Claims 1, 3, 5, 24, 33-38, 41, 42, 51 and 52 are cancelled by the present amendment. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 3, 6, 7, 18, 21, 33-38, 41-43, 48 and 51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,289,234, herein "Asano") in view of Kubota et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,708,455, herein "Kubota"); Claims 4, 23, 26 and 28-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano, Kubota and in view of Saito et al. (U.S. Pat. Pub. 2003/0091366, herein "Saito"); Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano, Kubota in further view of Noda et al. (U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2002/0122677, herein "Noda"); Claims 8, 9, 44 and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano in view of Kubota in further view of Ebata et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,023,660); Claims 10-12 and 46-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano and Kubota in view of Kinoshita et al. (U.S. Patent 5,404,203 herein "Kinoshita"); Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano and Kubota in view of Miyabe et al. (U.S. Patent 5,950,047 herein "Miyabe"); Claims 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano and Kubota in view of Ojima et al. (U.S. Publication 2004/0191663 herein "Ojima"); Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano and Kubota in view of Ojima and Yamashiro et al. (U.S. Patent 5,328,795 herein "Yamashiro"); Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano and Kubota in view of Ojima and Inoue et al. (Japanese Publication

2000-172015 herein “Inoue”); Claims 19, 20 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano and Kubota or alternatively over Asano, Kubota and Saito in view of Keen (U.S. Patent 4,816,877); Claims 39 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano and Kubota in view of Kosuge (U.S. Publication 2003/004201); Claims 49, 50, and 52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Asano and Kubota in view of Keen; and Claims 5, 24 and 27 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 5, 24 and 27.

Accordingly, Applicants have Cancelled claims 5 and 24 and have incorporated the allowable features of these claims into independent Claims 4 and 23, respectfully. In addition, Claim 27 has been amended to be in independent form including all of the features of Claim 23 from which this claim depended. Further, dependent Claims 2, 6-22, 26, 28-30, 39, 40 and 43-50 have been amended to depend from one of independent Claims 4, 23 and 27 and the remaining claims have been cancelled.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the §103(a) rejections based on various combination of Asano, Kubota and Saito, Noda, Ebata, Kinoshita, Miyabe, Ojima, Yamashiro, Inoue, Keen and Kosuge are moot and respectfully request that these §103(a) rejections be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for the claims is earnestly solicited.

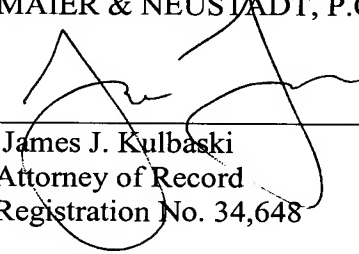
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